

As you all know, the cost of everything is becoming expensive. This also applies to arranging interesting speakers for our open meetings.

These speakers are experienced and provide interesting talks (and they are sometimes funny). Even if the subject is of no apparent interest to you, you will go home having learnt something and had a relaxing and lovely time (especially with our wonderful cakes, etc.)

Please don't forget that the u3a is about learning new things, so come on – support our speakers – they don't bite!

Blackmore Vale u3a

Open Afternoon

Tuesday 5th September

2.00pm - 4.30pm

Henstridge Village Hall

Please join us with a glass of wine and chat to our talented group leaders, see what they do and learn something new.



Group Coordinator's Report

Groups Report 12th August 2023

Please see list of group leaders at the back of this newsletter for contact details.

Boules: a new boules group has started and meets at the boules piste behind Henstridge Village Hall, where tables and benches are available. Initially there will be one group starting at 14:30, finishing at 16:00 and meeting on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. Due to the amount of interest, a second group may be formed. There is no group leader yet, so please contact Hilary Smith, Groups Co-ordinator, if you are interested in joining.

Bridge: meets on 2nd and 4th Monday in Lounge of Henstridge Village Hall at 14:15 ready to start playing at 14:30 (small charge to cover cost of hall hire). Group leader is Howard Warden. The group is taking a break during the summer and will meet again on 11th September.

Croquet: now restarted and meeting at Jean Lindley's House when the weather is favourable. This is necessarily on an ad hoc basis, so please contact Jean if you do not receive e-mails from her about this and would like to. Group leader is Jean Lindley.

Garden Visits: led by Jan Nast, assisted by Brita Wood. Meets on the first Monday of each month in at 11:00 and the group decides which gardens to visit that month. The group meets at Thyme after Time, near Stalbridge.

Lunch / Pudding Club: led by Jean Lindley. The group offers visits to a local pub / restaurant for lunch on a bi-monthly basis, alternating with the starters / pudding club which meets at Jean's house. Members take either a starter or dessert to share.

Photography: led by David Foster. It meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 19:30 at a group member's house when arrangements will be made to have trips out to take photographs and share knowledge with other members. Anyone who is interested in improving their photography skills is welcome to join.

Reading: led by Jean Lindley. There are two groups: One group meets in the Tippling Philosopher, Milborne Port at 10:30 on the 2nd Friday of each month and the other meets at the Virginia Ash, Henstridge at 15:00 on the 4th Friday of the month. Each group reads a book which is discussed when the group meets.

Walking Tuesday: led by Dennis Ollington, assisted by Ian Westall. They walk on the last Tuesday of the month. There is a different walk each month and the meeting place and time are determined by where the walk starts and how long it will take. Afterwards, refreshment is normally taken at a local hostelry. Please note that

Dennis and Ian will be standing down from their group leadership duties, so members are sought to fulfil this role which can easily be split so one person does not need to do everything. Please contact Dennis if you are able to help.

Walking Wednesday: led by Richard Kidd, assisted by Viv Evans and Hilary Smith. They walk on the third Wednesday of the month and the meeting place and time are determined by where the walk starts and how long it will take. Afterwards, refreshment is normally taken at a local hostelry.



Photography Group



The group has put together an array of photographs to be shown at the open afternoon on September 5th. There are shots taken on our outings over the past year and shots of our individual activities. The group is planning an early evening new members outing at a local venue to get a few shots and hopefully some nice sunset photographs. New members are always welcome just bring your camera or phone and start clicking.

Contact *David* the group leader for details



WALKING GROUPS

Tuesday Group

It is some time since I gave timely input to the newsletter. We are still walking every month and this year the weather has been kind to us.

We had our regular walk through Duncliffe Wood in April to enjoy the bluebells, a sure sign Spring is with us. Caroline and Gotthelf took us to Charlton Horethorne in May for a walk to Corton Denham. The view from above the village was very impressive. Fortunately, they didn't include a walk down the hill into the village. A lot of us wouldn't have made it up again.

Sadly, our planned Away Day to Portland, in June, had to be cancelled due to a clashing u3a event. The remainder enjoyed a repeat of the November walk and were able to enjoy the views round Marnhull that were missed first time around due to the poor weather.

In July we returned to an old favourite, with a walk around Spetisbury. Standing on the old bridge at the confluence of the Stour is one reason I love walking in the area so much.



Of course, all our walks culminate in refreshments at a local hostelry. My first visit to the Charlton Inn won't be my last.

Our next walk will be from the Fiddleford Inn and will have happened by the time the Newsletter goes to press.

Wednesday Group

In July we had a longer than usual "Away Day" walk. This took the SW Coast Path from Dancing Ledge to St Aldhelm's Point, then inland to the Square and Compass pub in Worth Matravers for lunch before returning to the cars parked in the NT Spyway

car park at Langton Matravers. While the route is largely along the cliff tops there are a couple of steepish descents to the shoreline, with corresponding ascents to return to the cliff top. Some members of the group opted to skip the last part of the route and use the path from Winspit to Worth Matravers. In planning the route, we had opted to exclude the section from St Aldhelms to Chapman's Pool. Although this section has excellent views down to Chapman's Pool and westward over Kimmeridge to Portland Bill, it includes a steep descent on 200 steps, followed by a steep 200 step ascent!



This is the bit of the July walk we didn't do!

In August we took an altogether more relaxed route around Spetisbury to Tarrant Crawford and then to the Iron Age hill fort of Spetisbury Rings. The first part of the walk is flat, crossing the flood plain of the River Stour. The walk up to the high point of the Rings at 81m above Ordnance Datum involves a gradual. Some of the group opted to take a short cut back to lunch at "The Shack" (much better than it sounds, or looks) while others followed the walk leader on a part of the walk not previously reconnoitered and took a circuitous route through an impressive beech and oak wood. Walkers in this area should be aware that several of the footpaths do not connect with the disused railway, even if on the map it looks as if they do!

Richard Kidd and Hilary Smith

richardakidd64@gmail.com.



GARDEN VISITS GROUP

We have again had some very successful trips during this nice Summer Season, which have included the following:

VEN HOUSE (Milborne Port on: Tues 27th June):

A large group of 30 (including non-Garden Group members) enjoyed this lovely garden and were taken around in two groups, with both the Head Gardener and his Assistant. This was followed by a delicious High Tea, served by their Staff in the Old Stables block.



HILLTOP (Stour Provost on: Sun 23rd July)

Ten of us enjoyed a nice walk around this traditional cottage garden, which is part of the NGS Garden Scheme on a lovely sunny afternoon, which was followed by the usual tea and home-made cake!

We changed the venue for the monthly Coffee Mornings to *The Buttercup Cafe*, which is a fairly new cafe within the grounds of the Grassroots Garden Centre, so were there for both of the July and August meetings. As from Monday 4th September, we are reverting back to our usual *Thyme-After-Time Cafe*, as space is rather limited at The Buttercup, so will be there for the Autumn/Winter Season, as it will also be a lot cooler, unfortunately!



We now also have two new members, so are at full capacity at 30 members, with two new u3a members on the 'waitlist'. Also, looking forward to seeing you at the Annual u3a Open Afternoon on: Tuesday 5th Sept, from:2.30-4pm, at Henstridge Village Hall, as usual, where myself and Assistant Group Leader, Brita, will be on our Garden group stand with photos, posters etc., of our past and future trips.

Jan Nast



LUNCH CLUB

In June we lunched at The Kings Arms in Thornford. The food was nice, and all plates were cleared which is a good sign. One person said the desserts were particularly tasty. Altogether a good time was had by all. In August we will lunch at The Mitre in Sandford Orcas. This has always been a pub with a good reputation and run by the same couple since 1992 although none of us had been there for some while. Our next lunch at home will be on Wednesday 27th at 1pm.

Jean Lindley



READING GROUPS

The Tin Man

Sarah Winman

This is a book which produces opinions from all along the spectrum; from 'agonizingly beautiful' to 'so boring' we covered the lot. It is well written but it is surprising how a book can be wonderful to one person and tedious to another. Do read it, it is only a slim book, and see what you make of it. It had some excellent reviews and was shortlisted for the 2017 Costa Novel award.

The Quality of Silence

Rosamund Lupton

A book with a lesson at heart and that is we must save the Arctic and Antarctic. However, the story became rather unbelievable and not one of us really enjoyed it.

Miss Bensons Beetle

Rachel Joyce

An imaginative tale of a dowdy, middle-aged woman, an entomologist, who, after a prolonged one-sided affair with a professor, plunges into a madcap expedition to discover a non-listed golden beetle on a remote Southern Hemisphere Island, New Caledonia. She enlists a hapless assistant, who proves to be on the run, and often a liability but eventually becomes her best and only ever friend. This is an unlikely and amusing story but the plot has been well researched and is entertaining with unexpected twists experienced by its originally depicted characters. It is a rare event when everyone in the Reading Group enjoys a book but this was one such occasion.

Eileen Bate



CROQUET

Unfortunately, we have played very little this summer as it rained when the lawn should have been cut and when we wanted to play. We are hoping for an Indian Summer when we can get some games in. We have been pleased to gain some new players this year and spectators are always welcome. We are in great need of croquet mallets so if you have one hiding at the back of the shed please lend/give it to us and we shall be very grateful.

Jean Lindley



Fame at Last!



Five minutes of fame came to members at our last meeting in July when they were interviewed by Ruth Bradley and Paul Balthrop from BBC Points West about their views on the upcoming Somerset and Frome By-election. Apparently, it was fascinating to see what topics were edited out of the initial recordings. This interview was then transferred to the BBC website and radio Somerset. One member has been recognized in the street as that lady who was on TV!

Susan Kidd

History Tour



How well do we know the area in which we live? Well in 2024 there is an opportunity to find out more.

On Saturday May 18th – All day event.

Stalbridge is the smallest town in Dorset, beginning in around AD 860 as Stapulbridge. It began to grow in AD 860.

The original top of the market cross, that is used as a symbol on the membership card, blew off in 1950.

To delve deep into the Stalbridge history trail, join a walk led by a guide from The Stalbridge History Group.

Meeting at Dykes time TBA

Book with Judy Penfold.

Future events

(CAN BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

September 5th

Open Day – no speaker

November 7th

14.30 **Maggie Hague**

Yeovil Breast Cancer Charity

and

15.00 **Miranda Pender**

More of her songs and stories with a little Christmas twist.

2024

January 9th

Grand Winter Quiz

Quiz arranged by Pamela Slater

March 5th

Julia Holman

Lock'em Up or Let Them Out

How the Parole Board works

May 7th

David Boag, photographer

The Secret Wood

A 365-Day Journey in the British Countryside

Saturday May 18th

MEMBERS ONLY

Historical Walk, Stalbridge

July 2nd
MEMBERS ONLY
14.30 Michael Malagan, scriptwriter
Focusing on the funny side
Followed by
15.30 Anniversary Cream Tea

September 3rd
Open Day – no speaker

Friday September 27th
MEMBERS ONLY
Historical Walk, Milborne Port

November 5th
Brita Wood
Blackmore Vale Stationmasters

Highlighted events consist of our 10th Anniversary celebrations. Regrettably, due to limited numbers allowed, these have to be restricted to members of Blackmore Vale u3a only.



Your Committee

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Chair Vice Chair | Susan Kidd Gill Westall | skiddsbvu3a@gmail.com |
| Secretary | Helen Lennon | hlennon35@yahoo.co.uk |
| Membership Secretary | Gill Westall | bvmembership@outlook.com 01963 204318 |
| Treasurer | Judy Penfold | Jood58@gmail.com |
| Publicity | Susan Kidd | Skiddsbvu3a@gmail.com 01963 362107 |
| Newsletter and Web Page | Judy Penfold | Jood58@gmail.com |
| Speaker Secretary | Pamela Slater | Pslater321@btinternet.co.uk |
| Groups Coordinator | Hilary Smith | ron_hilary@tiscali.co.uk |
| Committee Member | Lin Allison | allisonlinda021@gmail.com |
| Committee Member | VACANT | |

Group contacts

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Walking Group, Tuesday | Dennis Ollington | Ollingd1@yahoo.com |
| Walking Group, Wednesday | Richard Kidd | richardakidd64@gmail.com |
| Reading Groups | Jean Lindley | ejlbyre@btinternet.com |
| Croquet / Lunch Club | Jean Lindley | ejlbyre@btinternet.com |
| Bridge | Howard Warden | Warden444@btinternet.com |
| Garden Visits | Jan Nast | Janice.nast@gmail.com |
| Photography | David Foster | davidfoster1625@gmail.com |

GENERAL MEETINGS

Are usually held in Henstridge Village Hall from 2.15pm on the first Tuesday of alternate months.

Members £2.00 Visitors 3.00

All our general meetings are publicised in the online Blackmore Vale magazine, local Facebook pages, websites and magazines. Posters are circulated to public places in Stalbridge, Henstridge, Wincanton, Templecombe and Milborne Port.

Venue hire

Please remember when making bookings that each group is self-funding, therefore, if there are any costs involved, a suitable fee should be charged to attendees to cover these costs. **Also, a copy of the invoice and receipt is required to be sent to the Treasurer each month to be entered into the main accounts.**

Privacy Policy

Please be assured that we will never pass on your details to third parties without explicit consent from you and that we will never share your details with any company or charity for marketing purposes.

The contents of this newsletter are provided by the members for the members and is produced at no cost to the members.